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PRODUCT CHANGE METHOD FOR A CIGARETTE MANUFACTURING
MACHINE

TECHNICAL FIELD

10 The present invention relates to a product change
method for a cigarette manufacturing machine.

BACKGROUND ART

On cigarette manufacturing machines for example of
the type disclosed in GB-952077-A, US-4756315-A1 or GB-
15 2088693-A, product changes are normally made by stopping
the machine and clearing the various compartments of the
machine either by hand or using external suction devices.

Which operations obviously involve relatively long
machine stoppages and the use of skilled labour.

20 DISCLOSURE OF INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide
a product change method for a cigarette manufacturing
machine, designed to eliminate the aforementioned
drawback.

25 More specifically, it is an object of the present
invention to provide a method of effecting a product
change on a cigarette manufacturing machine substantially
without stopping the machine.

point, suction along suction conduit 10 is cut off.

At the same time (Figure 3), deflecting member 28 is moved into the lowered work position to direct the remaining bead 19 of shredded tobacco 3a, without relative paper strip 22, into waste bin 31. This operation continues (Figure 4) until manufacturing machine 1 is cleared completely, which may optionally be perfected automatically using compressed air jets in known manner not shown.

At this point, with the machine in the same configuration described above, but with suction restored along suction conduit 10, valve 12b is opened to feed shredded tobacco 3b directly into input hopper 2 (input hopper 2 is empty to begin with, so that plate 7 is kept in the vertical open position by level sensor 9) and afterwards only into box 5. By means of successive loads of shredded tobacco 3b, manufacturing machine 1 is filled completely with tobacco 3b to form a bead 19, which is fed, without relative paper strip 22, along forming table 20 and directed by intercepting device 27 into waste bin 31. Only when the correct compactness of bead 19 of shredded tobacco 3b is achieved, are conveyors 14 and 25 stopped and then started again, after feeding paper strip 22 along forming table 20, to form a new type of continuous cigarette rod 21, a first portion of which is again directed by intercepting device 27 into waste bin 31. Finally, deflecting member 28 is restored to the raised rest position to permit normal production of the

CLAIMS

1) A product change method for a cigarette manufacturing machine, wherein an input hopper (2) receives a first type (3a) of shredded tobacco from a supply header (4), and feeds it to at least one channel (17) for forming a bead (19) of tobacco, which is released onto a paper strip (22) travelling along a forming table (20) for forming a continuous cigarette rod (21); the method comprising the steps of cutting off supply of said first type (3a) of tobacco to said manufacturing machine (1); unloading the first type (3a) of shredded tobacco from the manufacturing machine (1) to form a waste stream ~~(31)~~ (30) of shredded tobacco of the first type (3a); and feeding a second type (3b) of shredded tobacco through the supply header (4) and the input hopper (2) until the manufacturing machine (1) is completely full.

2) A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein unloading the first type (3a) of tobacco comprises the step of arresting said paper strip (22).

3) A method as claimed in Claim 2, and comprising the further step of only starting up supply of said paper strip (22) when the manufacturing machine (1) is filled completely with said second type (3b) of shredded tobacco.

4) A method as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 3, wherein the first type (3a) of tobacco is unloaded by